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FEBRUARY 10, 1953
752nd BROADCAST

Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

Broadcast by 300 Stations of the ABC Radio Network



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Which Way for a Better America?

Moderator, GUNNAR BACK

Speakers

ERIC GOLDMAN

LAWRENCE FERTIG



COMING

—February 24, 1953—

**Is the United Nations the World's Best
Hope for Peace?**

Published by THE TOWN HALL, Inc., New York 36, N. Y.

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 38



\$5.00 A YEAR, 15c A COPY



Town Meeting

VOL. 18

No. 38



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The Broadcast of February 10, 1953, from 9:00 to 9:45 p.m., E.S.T., over the American Broadcasting Company Radio Network, originated from the ABC Radio Studio, 39 West 66th Street, New York City, New York.



The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of views presented.

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

ERIC F. GOLDMAN—Associate Professor of History, Princeton University, author of *Rendezvous With Destiny*. Mr. Goldman was born in Washington, D.C., in 1915, and was brought up and received his entire education in Baltimore, ending in 1938 with a Ph.D. degree in American History from Johns Hopkins University (where he had earlier received his B.A. and M.A. degrees). He taught at Johns Hopkins from 1935 to 1940 and since then has been on the faculty of Princeton University, where he is associate professor of history and one of the most popular lecturers.

He is author of two previous books, *John Back McMaster, Historian of the People* (1943) and *Charles J. Bonaparte, Patrician Reformer* (1943); co-author of another, and editor of a fourth. He has written articles for all the leading publications in the field of American history as well as for the *New Republic*, the *Political Science Quarterly*, the *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and others. *Rendezvous With Destiny* is an 80-year survey of the American reform movement.

LAWRENCE FERTIG—Columnist on economic affairs for the *New York World Telegram and Sun* and other Scripps-Howard papers. Mr. Fertig was born in New York City and was graduated from New York University in 1920. He received his Master's Degree in Economics from Columbia, then continued his studies for a Doctorate at New York University. Mr. Fertig's column interpreting economic events appears regularly each week in the Scripps-Howard press, while on radio and television he has appeared frequently in discussions over the national networks. In addition, he has contributed many articles on economic affairs to leading magazines.

Town Meeting is published weekly at 32 S. Fourth St., Columbus 15, Ohio, by The Town Hall, Inc., New York 36, New York. Send subscriptions and single copy orders to Town Hall, New York 36, N.Y.

Subscription price, \$5.00 a year, (Canada, \$6.00); six months, \$3.00, (Canada, \$3.50); eight weeks, \$1.00, (Canada, \$1.20); 15c a single copy. Entered as second-class matter May 9, 1942, at the Post Office at Columbus, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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Which Way for a Better America?

Moderator Back:

We're glad to have Town Meeting in New York City once again. But tonight we'll take just a moment, before we introduce our speakers, to have a word from the radio and television editor of *Motion Picture Daily*, Mr. Pinky Herman.

Mr. Herman:

This award has been given to America's Town Meeting by the radio editors of the United States and Canada who have selected America's Town Meeting as the best public service program in the country, and *Motion Picture Daily* has the honor to present this award of achievement to you, Mrs. Herrick.

Mrs. Herrick:

Thank you very much, Mr. Herman. As Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Town Hall, it's a great privilege to be here tonight to receive this award, and I know I speak on behalf of the trustees when I say to you that we very greatly appreciate the recognition of Town Meeting of the Air as the best public service program. The trustees actually have very little, if anything, to do with the excellence of the program. The excellence of the program is due to the devoted work of William R. Traum, Director of our Radio Division, and to his able assistants who are here this evening, Harriet Halsband and Alice Paintlarge. But Town Hall thanks you and all those who voted for this program. Now I return you to Mr. Gunnar Back.

Mr. Back:

Well, that was very nice. Thank you very much, Pinky Herman of *Motion Picture Daily*, and I am

very appreciative of your response, Mrs. Herrick, for Town Meeting of the Air. Tonight, America's Town Meeting of the Air is heard from New York City. We have a question this evening that many of you, I know, feel was pretty much answered on November 4 when Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected to the presidency. Our subject is, Which Way for a Better America? Those of you who feel that we are now *on* that better way no doubt remember that General Eisenhower, the campaigner, said that what he stood for was this, "I ask myself only this—is it good for all the people?"

Ike, it was argued, stood for a classless society in which every man had as good right as the next man to push ahead to make his own way in life, something that the General insisted had been denied many men in the past 20 years. The people of all classes went to the polls and voted for Ike. That was the argument of President Eisenhower's supporters, because these people believed, they said, that the better way for America was to end the struggle involving the worker and the intellectual against the business community. Well, there were millions, too, who voted for Adlai Stevenson, and in defeat they said that Mr. Stevenson still had the profounder and more perceptive knowledge of the future way for a better America.

Tonight on Town Meeting, we're not reviewing the campaign of last fall, but the new president has now announced his program in detail. He has built the team that will carry it out, so it's a good time to have a second look, as it were, at what we might expect under tonight's heading, Which

Way for a Better America? We raise the question because Eric F. Goldman is one of the persons we'll be hearing from tonight. Mr. Goldman is the author of a book that came out last fall called *Rendezvous With Destiny*. There are critics who say it should get the Pulitzer Prize for its contribution to our knowledge of American history.

Mr. Goldman has examined in detail in his book all the political movements of our history since the Civil War. He has shown how the seeming Truman concept in the past has succeeded or failed, how the seeming Eisenhower concept of government has worked in the past or has not worked within the framework of its times, all of this of course in the past. Eric Goldman is a young associate professor of history at Princeton University. He will contend tonight that a better road for America will be found in the world of liberalism as he has traced it for 50 years and finds it can be defined today after mutations of the times.

He will not agree with our second speaker, Lawrence Fertig, columnist and economic affairs expert for the New York *World Telegram and Sun* and the Scripps-Howard Newspapers, who will argue that our reliance on the Federal Government for the main-spring of our prosperity has been false, that the day of individual initiative must now be definitely here. But here first on the question of Which Way for a Better America is Mr. Eric Goldman.

Mr. Goldman:

I think in answering that question it might perhaps be best for me to indicate what I think Mr. Eisenhower is doing at the present time, based particularly on his eleven point program issued yester-

day. I think Mr. Eisenhower is neither a conservative in the old Rooseveltian sense of the word nor a liberal in the Rooseveltian-Truman, or present-day sense. I think he is something that we had better call a new conservative. By a new conservative I mean a person who, by and large, accepts the social and economic legislation of the last 20 years, but as for any further legislation he says, we'd better appoint a committee.

I think he's a person, the new conservative, who by and large favors collective security around the world but adds, let's keep a very wary hand on the purse and no fiddle faddle about the Indonesians. I think above all he's a person who, in respect to the key issue of liberty in our country, takes the attitude that we must deplore the methods of McCarthyism and then adds sadly, very sadly, it's too bad that the folly of the liberals made McCarthyism inevitable.

There, I think is the basic line of policy of the new administration, and I think it will fail to bring us to a better America for three very specific reasons. It overlooks, by its opposition to further experimental legislation, the grave problem of the middle classes, some 75 per cent of the American population. It overlooks the pressing, yearning needs of our minorities, a less large, but no less critical, section of our population. And above all, it overlooks the necessity for zestful experimentation in our thought by overwhelming us with what Mr. Eisenhower calls the best brains in the country and then identifies, as the best, business brains. For those specific reasons I would suggest that the way to a better America

should include at least a greater leavening of liberalism.

Mr. Back:

Thank you very much, Mr. Goldman. You have made your position clear. Mr. Lawrence Fertig of the *New York World Telegram* and *Sun* and the Scripps-Howard newspapers has been listening. Now, Mr. Fertig, your way to a better America.

Mr. Fertig:

Mr. Back, I think that for a stronger, finer, and I may say, a more liberal America, I suggest we follow the ideas outlined by President Eisenhower in his State of the Union message. We've got to depend more upon the initiative and creative power of the people themselves as individuals and less upon the government, whether in buying and selling in the market place, establishing prices, or in bargaining for wages and working conditions. Now if this nation is to grow great in the future as it has in the past, we'll have to repudiate some of the reactionary ideas that have come out of Washington during the past 20 years and masqueraded as liberal.

Among them is the propaganda that the Federal Government is the mainspring of our prosperity, and that our well-being depends upon the further extension of government action into new fields, and more control of the people. We want no more Spence bills which authorize the government to go into the manufacturing of steel, or shoes, or underwear, or anything else it desired in order to promote what it called prosperity. We want no threats of the nationalization of medicine or of anything else.

In fact, for a better America it would be a good idea for our educational institutions to lay less

stress on collective action, on collective income, and collectivism in general and more upon the necessity for individual responsibility, individual effort, and individual freedom. This is sound liberal doctrine.

Now to my mind there can be no strong, free America if we continue to have inflation, and inflation does not mean price and wage controls. It is a money disease, and the past administration never paid too much heed to creating more and more money. That's what inflation is. Now if we're going to halt inflation then those who call themselves liberals will have to face one fact. The penalty that they must face is that they must refrain from starting a new inflation in order to prevent the old boom from dying down a little. We must permit adjustments in the economic structure and stop assuring the nation that it can have a non-stop boom without a consequent bust. Now I've got just two other points, Mr. Back, briefly.

In the first place, if we want to have a dynamic America we must prevent any group in society from holding monopoly power. We prevented management and capital from having monopoly, and I think now we've got to prevent a few men who control the powerful, large labor unions from having a monopoly. And finally, Mr. Back, I would say this, that for a stronger America it would be well for those who call themselves liberals if they did not regard every honest revelation of communist conspiracy with indifference and even with cold hostility.

There is communism in this country in high places, and if we're going to defend civil liberty properly then those whose business it is to defend civil liberties must not

always be hostile to the regulation of communist conspiracy. Finally, for a better America, we must substitute a more realistic foreign policy for the muddled and disastrous policy of the past.

Mr. Back: O.K., Mr. Fertig. I noticed that you addressed many of your points to me. Don't look at me, look at Mr. Goldman.

Mr. Goldman: Mr. Fertig, may I cut in and suggest that we had better drop these terms liberal and conservative at the present? They're reaching already a kind of semantic bedlam, and there's no point in it. What I'd like to suggest on that is that Mr. Fertig is essentially depending upon the concept of a self-regulating economy. Get the government out of it, and the economy will roll along in a kind of blissful freedom. I think all of us would like to have such a free economy. The difficulty is that our economy has been made unfree not by the government, but by the people of the United States and particularly by its businessmen.

I was browsing through the Federal Trade Commission report the other day. Professors do queer things like that, and there I saw the statement that in 1947, 116 manufacturing firms in the United States controlled 46 per cent of the entire manufacturing plant and equipment in this country. Under such circumstances, to talk about a free American economy makes very little sense to me.

Mr. Back: Well, Mr. Goldman, Mr. Fertig has said that he wants to eliminate monopoly. Haven't you said that?

Mr. Fertig: Yes, but Dr. Goldman is implying that this country consists of monopoly, which is contrary to the truth. Now I appeal to the ladies and gentlemen of this

audience who go into a department store, who go into the food store every Saturday, at least, and perhaps twice a week, and see the keenest kind of competition. There is no monopoly on the farms of this country. There is no monopoly in the food of this country.

Mr. Goldman: May I cut in a moment?

Mr. Fertig: Just a moment, Doctor Goldman. There is no monopoly in the department stores of the things that go into the department stores. This is a creature of Dr. Goldman's imagination. Because we have anti-monopoly laws, I'm in favor of continuing them and prosecuting monopoly, but in trying to tell you that this country is controlled by monopoly, I think he is stating something that is not a fact.

Mr. Goldman: That's an extraordinarily interesting statement of what I did not say. I haven't used the word monopoly at all. This country is not controlled by monopolies. Its business life, like its labor life and like its agricultural life, has now gone into huge units. We are operating with these units in all three fields. Under those circumstances, the individual is not a free person in our society any more, and I would suggest that the government, the Federal Government, is the only umpire we can call upon to see to it that those three great power groups do not crush all the rest of us.

Mr. Fertig: Dr. Goldman insists that we're not free people, and that somebody is controlling us, that somebody is setting prices—not competition. I insist that it's competition, the keenest kind of competition. I don't care whether there are seven big units in an industry or 27 big units in an industry, as long as they are forced to compete,

and they do compete, as for instance in the automobile business, the greatest value in the world that the American consumer gets. As in the food business, as in clothing for instance, as in everything, practically everything you buy, so that this idea that we are not free people is, I think, far from the truth.

Mr. Goldman: Well, we're using the word freedom in several different senses. I don't quite understand, Mr. Fertig, what your position is. Are you arguing that we should permit business to concentrate indefinitely, to go on concentrating, or are you arguing that we should use Anti-Trust laws to break it up?

Mr. Fertig: I am arguing that it is the job of the government to see that competition exists, but competition does exist today. There's no question about that. Now it seems that what Dr. Goldman wants is the government to step into business. He rather likes the idea, and he's rather afraid, you notice, of a free market. Now for instance, President Eisenhower had the courage, the political courage, to discontinue price and wage control. He insisted that this economy be taken out of the hands of the bureaucrats and turned back to the people. Are you against that, Dr. Goldman?

Mr. Goldman: I'm confused. If you're presenting Mr. Eisenhower as an exponent of a free economy, I am definitely confused. For example, take the farmer who is supposed to be the sturdy, free yeoman, if there ever was one. At the present time, the farmer is buttressed by the government in every conceivable way.

Mr. Fertig: You like that buttressing, don't you? You were in favor of it.

Mr. Goldman: May I suggest that Mr. Eisenhower favors that buttressing, and what I'm really suggesting is that we do not have a free economy with these large units and, much more, no one part of our economic population wants a free economy. That includes the businessmen who want to run to the RFC for loans; it includes the farmers who want parity; it includes the laboring man who wants the protection of law.

Mr. Fertig: Dr. Goldman, I'm against the government supporting the farmer, I'm against the government supporting the businessman, I'm against the government supporting any special group in society. I maintain it is not the function of the government to support special groups; it is the duty of the government to see that the consumer gets a break, the general consumer. Now you, on the other hand I take it, would like the government to favor special groups. You think it's the duty of the government to favor what you might call depressed groups whether it be labor, the farmer, or anybody that you happen to think is not in line with what you think ought to be prosperity.

Mr. Goldman: Mr. Fertig, I should love to see a free economy as much as you. But I suggest that in the 20th century our economic life is organized in such a way that we cannot simply assume that the individual is free to operate against these large groups. I, as an individual, am operating against organized agriculture, organized labor, and organized business. This consumer that you're talking about, this man you're going to favor, who is he?

Mr. Fertig: I'm against organized labor having a strangle hold upon the country. I'm against any group

being favored by the government, but you, it seems to me, Dr. Goldman, are rather fearful of a free society; you're fearful of a free market, you're fearful of the freedoms, because you don't believe that the people can handle their freedoms. And I think they can. I think we'll get a better world when the people do these things, and not the government.

Mr. Back: Gentlemen, may I intrude as a moderator? Let me bring this down to specific things. Is the way better ahead for the farmer than it was before? Is there a future for him that he didn't have before? Is there a future for the laboring man that he didn't have before? Is there a future for a middle class? Mr. Goldman raised the question of whether or not President Eisenhower would do anything for the great middle class. So let's begin with the question, What Is the Better Way in America for the Farmer? Let's start out with that, go back to that.

Mr. Fertig: I would say there is a future in America for all the people, all workers of America. This talk of Dr. Goldman's about favoring the middle class is, I think, approaching the ridiculous, because everybody is of the middle class in the United States. Now you can favor one group. *(laughter)* Yes, we all have a little cottage, and we all raise some kids, and we all do pretty much the same things, and the income level of the United States—I would say 75 or 80 or 85 per cent of the people of this country are considered the middle class.

I believe there's a great future in America for everybody, but I do not believe that you achieve that future by trying to favor the farmer, or the members of big labor unions, or business people,

or any other one group. That's the point I'm making. I don't want the farmer to have price crops. I don't think you need . . .

Mr. Back: Dr. Goldman, I think you raised the original question that you didn't think that the Eisenhower program would take care of this . . .

Dr. Goldman: I'd rather, if you don't mind, go back to the other question. As I understand it, Mr. Fertig favors freedom. Everybody favors freedom; we are all against sin. His freedom, when it boils down to hard fact, means removal of price supports for the farmer. It means removal of protective legislation for the working man, and it means removal of that whole series of instrumentalities in the government which at the present time help the businessman. Under those circumstances, I suggest that your freedom would lead us straight back to 1929, which the American people and President Eisenhower have flatly repudiated.

Mr. Eisenhower repudiated it very vigorously in the speech just before his election when he said, "This people will insist through its government or any other instrumentality in maintaining full employment."

Mr. Fertig: Well, we have a situation today where you have a boom. There's no question about that, you've got an inflation, yet many people want to continue that boom. Now Dr. Goldman doesn't believe that the government itself—as a matter of fact, he'd like to see the government favor individual groups; he would not like to see the government continue. Now, if you're going to have more inflation, you're going to have more trouble. And I believe that it is the problem of the government to stop this inflation. That's the most

important thing we can do, because then you won't need controls.

Mr. Goldman: And I gather the way to stop inflation is to remove price controls.

Mr. Fertig: President Eisenhower has done it. This country has grown great without controls. Why are we all frightened . . .

Mr. Goldman: I don't think they're frightened, Mr. Fertig. What they're suggesting is that, in the time of extreme emergency, when we are at war abroad, there are such extraordinary pressures on our economy that in order to preserve a decent standard of living for the masses of our people certain controls have to be exercised.

Mr. Fertig: You know, I had a discussion with Governor Arnall on this very program, on television on the subject of price control, and he said some six or eight months ago that unless we tighten the price control laws there would be chaos in this country. Well, we didn't tighten them, we loosened them. And as a matter of fact anybody who goes into a department store or a food store knows that during the past six months prices generally have not gone up, so that actually this country can adjust itself to a free market. It seems to me that there's so much fright about the free market; people seem to have been weaned on a government-controlled economy so much that they're now afraid to go back to the only basis on which a free society can exist.

Mr. Goldman: As I recall, when price controls were removed in 1946, prices shot up some 22 per cent.

Mr. Fertig: Yes, when price controls were removed at that time we had had repressed inflation.

Mr. Goldman: We have repressed inflation now, too.

Mr. Fertig: I would say this: that practically all items are under ceilings today, and the point is this, that Dr. Goldman doesn't believe that a price means anything, and I do. When a price goes up it limits the amount of consumption and it increases the supply. If I make steak 50 cents a pound, if I put a price ceiling on it, you'd always have a shortage of steak; so I believe that prices are important and you should let the free-price system function.

Mr. Back: Gentlemen, we wish here at Town Meeting that every one of our listeners could participate directly in Town Meeting. Again tonight, we are having our speakers answer a question submitted in advance by a listener. Next week another complete set of the American People's Encyclopedia will be sent to a listener whose question our program staff considers the most appropriate and pertinent.

This week our listener question comes from Mr. W. H. Pearson of Westchester Avenue, Ellicott City, Maryland, and Mr. Pearson's question is this: "Since the destiny of America is in the hands of the people who are subject to the foibles of human nature, must not the problem of a well-informed, stable electorate be a matter of ceaseless governmental concern?" Mr. Fertig, I offer that to you first.

Mr. Fertig: I certainly think that an informed public is essential for a functioning democracy, and I think greater educational opportunities are important. Education, according to the constitution, is the function of the state. I believe the states should extend their educational facilities within their limits, but I do not believe that

the Federal Government should step into education, because the last thing in the world I want to see are the ideas of this country, of the youth and the people going to colleges in this country, controlled from Washington.

Mr. Back: Mr. Goldman, I think that raises one of the questions about a better America. It's been argued that the Federal Government could make it better for education in certain areas. How do you feel about this whole question?

Mr. Goldman: Well, I would suggest, as Mr. Fertig has, that the essential is upbuilding the American school system, but I am not as confident as he is that our states will upbuild it. Our states have had more than 150 years to do it, and we find the American educational system, according to education authorities, in a worse state in proportion to our population now than it's been at any time since 1840.

I suggest this is one of these cases where freedom means, do something to protect freedom, and what has to be done here is to provide those states which are either too poor or under too ignorant leadership to procure the education, the funds, and the initiative from the rest of the nation. And this can be done *only* through the Federal Government.

Mr. Back: Mr. Fertig, how are you envisioning a better America in education?

Mr. Fertig: I agree with General Eisenhower's statement that he made in 1949 on the Federal Aid to Education Bill, adding three hundred million dollars more to an inflationary budget. He said, "I'm not against the Federal Government setting minimum educational standards for poor states and assisting them to reach that limit.

What I am against is taking money from the rich states of the Union, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and others and then handing it back to them as aid to education. That doesn't make any sense at all." There are some things that ought to be decentralized in this country, and one of them is education. I would hate to see a federally controlled educational system.

Mr. Goldman: Mr. Back, on this general point Mr. Fertig tends to appropriate into his view of things the love of freedom. All of us, of course, have equal love but we differ as to the means of arriving there. One of the great fears concerning freedom is apparently inflation, but I would like to suggest that at the present time under the inflation we fear so much, the American people are actually enjoying a real prosperity unprecedented in the history of this or any other country. It may be as a man I met on the train said to me the other day, it may be that what costs a dime now used to cost a nickel, but the difference is I have the dime now. (*applause*)

Mr. Fertig: You know, the great prosperity of this country is due to just one thing. It's due to the people of this country, their thrift, their great ability to create, their creative power, and the building of tools and machinery which produce goods faster and cheaper. Now that creative power is so great that we produce this great prosperity. In addition to that, we overstimulated the economy during the war, and we had an inflation. We're like a man on a bicycle; it's fine, but we've got to slow up sometime to get relief, and I ask Dr. Goldman does he want to continue this inflation? Do you want to deprive bondholders . . .

Mr. Goldman: I would like to

suggest to you that inflation is not always an unmixed evil.

Mr. Back: I would like to suggest to you that we leave inflation and go to some of the other problems that concern us about a bet-

ter America, such as your second point, the matter of minorities, the whole question of civil liberties. I hope that those things will come up in the course of our questioning from our New York audience.

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QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Questioner: Mr. Goldman, since our prosperity was built on flexibility and resourcefulness, whence came this idea that tariff laws and unions must keep the same people doing the same things all their lives?

Mr. Goldman: I think that the general liberal program at this time calls for a cutting down of tariffs and for a relaxation of what are considered the excesses in the strength of unions in this country. In short, what liberals are trying to do is to restore the very flexibility which you spoke of. The liberal program changes as problems change in this country.

Mr. Back: Dr. Goldman, are you saying that those people who are known as the liberals, let's say the liberals in Congress and others, have now come to an agreement that the labor unions have grown too strong?

Mr. Goldman: I would say there's a growing tendency on the part of liberal publications and liberal politicians to take that point of view.

Mr. Fertig: May I say, Mr. Back, that every evidence of the campaign, of Mr. Stevenson's stand, of the ADA, the Americans for Democratic Action, the liberal party, all these who call themselves liberal, indicate that there is no relaxation in their idea that they must build up the union strength, whereas I think the truly liberal position

should be that the great power of the monopoly unions should decline.

Questioner: Mr. Fertig, do you favor a lowering of tariffs or do you believe such a reduction would do more hurt than good to domestic industry?

Mr. Fertig: The tariff question is a very difficult one, but I'd just like to make this statement about it. Tariffs used to be the only impediment to trade. Now that's no longer true, because foreign nations have controls over their money; they put out official values on their money, and they have quotas—import quotas. And these things are really more detrimental to trade than tariffs. Now I am in favor of decreasing tariffs, but if we decrease tariffs, others have to decrease tariffs, and they must do away with those impediments to trade which now exist that are even more important than tariffs. The tariff is not the only answer to increase foreign trade.

Mr. Back: Dr. Goldman, do you want to comment on that?

Mr. Goldman: No, I agree with Mr. Fertig's position.

Questioner: Mr. Goldman, don't you think the American youth should be taught more geography and history of the world?

Mr. Goldman: I certainly do. As the author of a textbook on world history, I emphatically do.

Questioner: Mr. Fertig, will a

rapid cut in controls and government expenditures result in a deflationary spiral which might eventually lead into a panic?

Mr. Fertig: I don't think so. Don't forget, if we cut our expenses, we can cut our taxes. And then if we cut our taxes people have more money to spend on goods. We cannot get prosperous by making goods that are shot away in the war, that aren't consumed by people. I don't think that prosperity needs to be built upon a war economy. I think that we can decrease our expenses and still have prosperity.

Mr. Back: Dr. Goldman, would you like to comment on that?

Mr. Goldman: I would only like to comment that I think an unfortunately large part of our argument has concerned just how does an individual make a little bit more money? I don't think this country was built on that conception; I don't think it will really flourish on that conception. I'm sorry we haven't gotten more into the question of how do you create a better rounded human being, in which case I suspect we'd be a little more suspicious of a good many of the men who are manning this particular crusade of new conservatism.

Mr. Back: I think, Dr. Goldman, we can get into that. For example there is the question how about the needs of the minorities, do you look for a better America on that, Mr. Fertig?

Mr. Fertig: Yes, I certainly do. I think there's been tremendous progress. I think, for instance, that one great minority problem is the Negro problem, and I think there's been great progress in the education of the South toward a more tolerant attitude on the Negro question. After all, lynchings are

practically eliminated. There are none any more, we're very glad to note, and I think that the South is gradually eliminating the poll tax. It's making progress on this very important issue for them. We cannot solve that issue over night.

Mr. Back: What do you think has moved it more rapidly than it's moved in the past?

Mr. Fertig: I think public opinion and education. Those are the two great forces. You cannot do it by force.

Mr. Goldman: I'd like to say that the last 20 years of history in the United States has suggested that what has moved forward these voluntary movements has been the gadfly action of reformers, who have said, either give the Negro some education in a better school or by law we'll force it. I might say the thing has been going on all over the country, and people in order to avoid the laws have been cleaning up the situation.

Mr. Fertig: I think the world is growing; I think it's learning. I think this country is beginning to understand its minority problems, and I think that tremendous progress has been made and will be made on all minority problems in this country.

Questioner: Mr. Fertig, isn't the deprivation of the tidelands oil revenue from the Federal Government contrary to administration aims to balance the budget and cut expenses?

Mr. Fertig: Well, sir, I would say that if there is some revenue that they didn't get there, that would be revenue that would be missed, but there's a more important principle involved in this and that is the principle of whether the Federal Government can grab everything in sight or whether

Congress has something to say about it.

Now there are some states where the revenue the government misses, the states will get, and Dr. Goldman was worried about education in some of these states. I would say that a great deal of that revenue will go for education, so that what is a loss to one part of the country is a gain to another.

Mr. Goldman: I'm afraid there's a difference in fact here. As I understand it, the proposal of the Truman administration was a bill which would vest the rights of the oil in the hands of the Federal Government for the purpose of using the entire returns of it for education, except a particular percentage which went to the states.

Under state control there is no guarantee, or even any indication except the vaguest promises, that any of it would go to education. I would like to say that behind the dispute—I wouldn't call it a grab, we're in polite society now—behind the dispute over tidelands oil, was the ever-threatening pressure of conservative Americans to turn the public lands back to the states, which means that some \$60,000,000 in annual income and some \$100,000,000 in property which rightfully belonged to all Americans would go back to private interests.

Mr. Fertig: I happen to think, and I agree with Mr. Wilson of the General Electric company, that if we sold the utility companies that are being operated by the government back to the people that would be a good idea. I'd like to see the government divest itself of many of its operations of today. I think the people ought to run the business of this country and the government ought to run the government. (applause)

Questioner: Mr. Fertig, is dis-

crimination in the United States hindering the fight for freedom and democracy abroad?

Mr. Fertig: Yes, sir, I would say that I think we all here are people of good will. We do not want to see discrimination. I would say that there is a great part of the world that imagines that conditions are much worse in this country than they are. They get curious ideas abroad about how we treat our minority groups. I think our minority groups are quite happy. I think they are making progress, and I do not think that the treatment of minorities in this country is any cause for the rest of the world to worry.

Mr. Goldman: May I broaden that comment a bit by asking whether the real issue here in all of these questions, discrimination and the other ones, is not a fundamental difference in approach between Mr. Fertig and myself and various parts of our audience? I think that Mr. Fertig believes in what might be called a jungle type of society. Freedom means tooth and fang to him. The government is your enemy. The Federal Government doesn't belong to you, you don't use it for purposes you want to, and therefore you keep the thing as restrained. You do as little as possible.

Mr. Fertig: I don't think jungle and fang idea represents my thought of society at all. I just don't want to see the fangs of the government used upon the individual. This country has grown great by individual effort. The government never creates wealth and income; it's individuals who do.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Fertig and Mr. Goldman, for your very interesting discussion of tonight's topic.

FOR FURTHER STUDY OF THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Background Questions

1. Is political party affiliation the most important criterion of difference of opinion and approach to America's future?
2. Or, are intra-party strife, inter-party unity and extra-party activity on numerous issues far more significant?
3. Are the terms "liberal" and "conservative" more descriptive or misleading than party labels in defining the real differences in values, aspirations and approach that often divide the American people?
 - a. Do these terms describe philosophies or approaches toward problems in general?
 - b. Do they represent profound differences in both philosophy and approach?
 - c. Has the "liberal" always been identified with change and reform?
 - d. Has the "conservative" always been identified with the status quo? Or, does this depend on the status quo involved?
 - e. Has the historical usage of these terms had anything to do with their literal meaning?
4. What are the primary differences and similarities between the liberalism of Adam Smith, Thomas Jefferson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt?
 - a. Does the laissez-faire versus planning argument symbolize the basic contradiction between classical and modern liberalism?
 - b. Is the difference primarily in the field of political economics or are social and ethical values involved?
 - c. Are there two kinds of liberalism today, or is one school of liberal thought wrong?
5. To what extent does the definition of modern liberalism depend on an understanding of the "big government" versus "small government" issue?
 - a. Is big government in and of itself desirable or undesirable? Or, does it depend on the objectives for which it functions and the interests it represents?
 - b. What factors were most responsible for the increasing growth of government during recent decades?
 - c. Was big government fostered in an attempt to cope with problems related to the depression?
 - d. What influence have recurrent wars and the present continuing crisis had on enlarging government's role in American life?
 - e. Has a more powerful federal government resulted, in part, from the inability or unwillingness of municipalities, states and private groups to assume certain social responsibilities?
 - f. Did certain aspects of big government result from major unequal-

ities that had developed in the American community? Is it a legitimate function of government to reduce inequalities that develop among competing interests?

6. During the presidential campaign both Pres. Eisenhower and Gov. Stevenson spoke against over-concentration of power in Washington. Were they motivated by a similar philosophy of government? If not, what were the most important discernible differences in their viewpoints?
7. Can the federal government, at this time, afford to divest itself of certain functions? If so, which ones?
8. What would be involved in a program of decentralization? Are there groups and local governments equipped and willing to undertake some of the necessary tasks?
9. Should the liberal always look to government as a referee among the various organized interests and as a protector of the unorganized interests?
10. What effect will the continuing threat of Soviet aggression have on any plans to curtail the responsibilities and powers of the federal government?
11. Have the liberals or reformers of the Roosevelt era become obsolete?
 - a. Have the major wrongs with which they were so concerned been substantially redressed?
 - b. Does Pres. Eisenhower's recommendations regarding security and welfare legislation consolidate their former objectives and put them beyond party politics?
12. What is the function of the liberal today?
 - a. Is the modern liberal primarily a reformer?
 - b. If so, are there new frontiers to which he should address himself? * * * e. g., the status of minorities, the protection of civil liberties, etc.
 - c. Can liberalism today be equated with untrammelled free enterprise?
 - d. Can it be equated with the welfare of any single group?
 - e. Is the modern liberal an equalitarian?
 - f. What is the relation of the modern liberal to the democratic process and majority rule? Has his revulsion from past emphasis on the dominance of rational processes tended to produce a fear of majorities?
 - g. Is the modern liberal also a conservative? Does he feel he has acquired rights and institutions worth conserving?
 - h. Is modern liberalism pragmatic or relativistic? Or, does it embody a system of morality and ethics? Is it wedded to specific values and goals?
 - i. To what extent are a tolerance of diversity and a recognition of experimentation essential to liberalism?

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THE WEEKS AHEAD



Following the current brief return to "home base" in New York City, "Town Meeting" will again be taking to the road for the remainder of the winter tour.

Next Tuesday, in Scranton, Pennsylvania, the Jewish Community Center, sponsors of the Scranton Civic Lyceum Series, will be our hosts. The topic up for discussion is a vital one: "How Can We Convince the World of Our Belief in Brotherhood?"

On February 24th, "Town Meeting" has been invited to the Chicago area, under auspices of the Downers Grove Village Forum. For the past seven years the Village Forum, composed of a group of citizen volunteers, has been bringing to their community outstanding cultural and civic events on a non profit basis. Whether or not the United Nations is our best hope for peace will be debated on this occasion.

The March 3rd broadcast will come to listeners from a "foreign" country—from Montreal, Quebec, Canada—coinciding with the start of an important series of meetings on Canada to be held at Town Hall, New York. When "Town Meeting" travels north of the border, an American and a Canadian business leader will discuss the topic, "How Can We Strengthen the Canadian-U. S. Partnership?" Richard L. Bowditch, President of the C. H. Sprague and Son, Boston, and Lionel A. Forsythe, President of the Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation, will be the speakers. Interrogating them on the areas where our countries agree, where the differences are, and how these differences can be reconciled, will be three prominent Canadian journalists. This unusual radio event is coming under joint auspices of the Montreal Board of Trade, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and its French equivalent, the *Chambre de Commerce*.

Back to the United States and specifically to Lancaster, in the heart of the "Pennsylvania Dutch" country, "Town Meeting" will help celebrate the centennial of Franklin and Marshall College, on March 10th. Just 100 years ago came the union of Franklin College (founded 1787) and Marshall College (founded 1832), which continued as a man's liberal arts college and now has an enrollment of one thousand students. Sponsoring "Town Meeting" will be the college's Diognothian Literary Society, "oldest continuously existing literary society in the country."

The following week the program heads south to Montgomery, Alabama, where we will be guests of the Montgomery Junior Chamber of Commerce. Part of the Jaycees' 1952-53 Lecture Series, their program of a previous season received a top citation by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce.

The United World Federalists is an organization "dedicated to the support and development of the United Nations into a world federal government and with limited powers adequate to assure peace." On March 24th, the Detroit chapter of UWF has invited "Town Meeting" to be there—and logically enough, the question to be discussed will have some bearing on the complicated yet urgent business of international government.